



Memorandum

**TO: PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION**

FROM: Julie Edmonds-Mares

**SUBJECT: KELLEY HOUSE MEETING
SUMMARY**

DATE: 08-19-13

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss and provide input on how to honor the legacy of the Kelley Family and the Kelley House site.

BACKGROUND

On February 16, 2012, the Kelley House caught fire and suffered substantial damage. The cause of the fire was undetermined. A claim was filed with Lexington Insurance. Based on the inspection and assessment, the insurance carrier estimated that the cost to rebuild the house is approximately \$2.32 million. Depreciation value will be \$469,000. A Cash settlement was also offered for \$1.95 million to demolish the house and make the area safe. The City of San Jose has two years from the date of the fire to rebuild, demolish, or build another structure in the same location. The deadline to settle with the insurance company is January 2014.

The 160 acres now known as Kelley Park had included various buildings and orchards that had cherries, apricots, and prunes planted. The property was purchased by Former San Jose Mayor Lawrence Archer in 1861 and it was eventually sold to the City of San Jose in various parcels between the years of 1951-1957. One the original buildings was the Kelley House, which had two stories, a basement and totaled 5,600 square feet. The original house burned in 1909 and was rebuilt on the same site in 1910. Mr. Archer's daughter, Louise Kelley, moved into the house after it was rebuilt and remained in the house until her death in 1952. The family home was renamed the Kelley House and the entire estate was developed as Kelley Park.

Although the Kelley House had demonstrated a combination of 20th century styles (Craftsman bungalow, Prairie School, and Classical Revival) the house could have been eligible under local City of San Jose's Historic Designation Ordinance, but was never registered. Additionally, the house was considered ineligible for the National Registry as the house was not associated with the period of time in which Mr. Archer achieved significance in San Jose. Therefore it was not a historical landmark, but was considered historically significant. The Kelley House was never opened the public.

ANALYSIS

Community input was gathered at a meeting on August 13, 2013 in which there were 16 attendees representing the City of San Jose, County Heritage Commission, History San Jose, Preservation Action Council of San Jose, Happy Hollow Foundation, Parks & Recreation Commission, and the local neighborhood. The purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm ideas to answer the question, “How can the community honor the legacy of the Kelley Family and Kelley House site, within the City’s budget constraints?”

Various ideas were brainstormed and are summarized as follows (in no particular order):

- Keep the Settlement funds at Kelley Park
- Combine Various Ideas as presented below
- Consider other various funding sources to help pay for: Capital, Programming, etc.
- Create “Virtual” Exhibits and post numerous physical signs on premises to honor the Kelley family (no plaques)
- Consider “themes”, such as Valley of Hearts Delight, etc.
- Rebuild House
 - Rebuild in Same location?
 - Rebuild in a different location?
 - House would need to be “active” (not sitting vacant)
 - Serve as a revenue source to maintain financial sustainability
- Demolish House
 - Conduct an Architectural Review prior (salvage anything from the house of architectural significance)
- Extend Happy Hollow Park & Zoo fence line to encompass site and possibly create a new exhibit area or “reptile house”
- Potential Dual Use in Happy Hollow Zoo (Paid Admission), as well as Kelley Park (Free)
- Rebuild Smaller Recreational Space for Community Use
- Play Space for Community (themed playgrounds)
- Restrooms Needed in area for Visitors/Community
- Create Gardens for the community to enjoy (community gardens, interpretive, botanical)
- Create a Festival Venue – possibility to combine with the use of the Amphitheater nearby
- Use consultant to create an updated, small scale Master Plan of Kelley Park
- History San Jose to assist with potential 3-D Scans of House

CONCLUSION

Upon receiving input from the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Historical Commission on September 4, 2013, Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services staff will conduct a further review of the alternatives for the settlement funds and prepare a memo to outline the preferred alternatives for City Council consideration and action some time during the month of October 2013. Once City Council has determined the course of action, the Department of Finance will conclude the settlement with the insurance company as appropriate. Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services staff will then coordinate with Department of Public Works to develop a work plan for the site.

JULIE EDMONDS-MARES, Director
Department of Parks, Recreation &
Neighborhood Service

Links to additional Kelley House information:

- [City of San Jose's Parks Division](#)
- [Architecture Archive](#)
- [SFGate](#)
- [City-Data.com](#)

KELLEY HOUSE SUMMARY

History of Kelley Park:

- The estate was purchased by Lawrence Archer in 1861 and named Lone Oak.
- A 30 acre orchard of cherries, apricots and prunes was planted.
- In August 1951, the City of San Jose purchased the house and 63 acres of the estate for \$142,000 for use as a public park on the condition that Louise Kelley was allowed to live in the house for the rest of her life.
- Eventually the City of San Jose purchased 156 acres (in successive parcels) of the 160 acres Mr. Archer purchased in 1861.
- In 1951, the property consisted of the main house, a carriage house, a barn, a walnut dehydrator, and a tank house.
- The only buildings currently on the land are the main house and carriage house.
- A deed was granted on September 30, 1955. The second deed for parcel #1 & #2 was granted on September 4, 1956, and the third deed for a different parcel #1 & #2 was granted on October 22, 1957.

Kelley House History:

- The original house burned in 1909.
- A new house was built in the same location in 1910 to replace the old house.
- Archer daughter, Louise Kelley, moved into the new house with her family in 1910.
- The Kelley House is not a historic landmark, but is considered historically significant.
- The house has two stories and a basement which totals 5,600 square feet.
- In 1987, Public Works declared the building uninhabitable.

- In May of 1994 an evaluation on the Kelley House stated that the house appeared to be ineligible for the National Register under Criterion B, for association with persons significant in our past.
- The Kelley Park Master Plan in 1995 states that the Kelley House should be restored and preserved as an historical asset for public use.
- A consultant was hired by Public Works in 1999, Garcia-Teague Architecture and Interiors to conduct a structural assessment and cost estimate to restore the building. The estimated cost was \$1.9 million, citing significant deficiencies that needed repair.
- Up to December 2007, park maintenance used the house as storage.
- A portion of the building (caretaker quarters on the northeast corner of building) was utilized as the park supervisor's office until 2009. Only this area was alarmed due to files and equipment in the office.
- In 2010, Public Works and Happy Hollow Park & Zoo contractors stored their equipment (title, signs, etc.) in the building following the reconstruction of Happy Hollow.

Kelley Park Master Plan

- A Task Force approved the Draft Master Plan in September 1991.
- Council approved Jones & Stokes Associates, Inc. for environmental consultant services for the 1991 Master Plan Project in the amount of \$114,380 on February 2, 1994.

1999 Kelley House Restoration Proposals

- Base Scheme cost \$1,574,458.
- Restoration Option cost \$414,298.

Kelley House Fire February 16, 2012

- The cause of the fire was undetermined.
- The House suffered substantial damage.
- A claim was filed with Lexington Insurance. Based on the inspection and assessment, the insurance carrier estimated that the cost to rebuild the house is approximately \$2.32 million. Depreciation value will be \$469,000.
- Cash settlement offered for \$1.95 million.
- The City of San Jose has two years to rebuild, demolish, or build another structure in the same location